H12 e 22

A SERMON

Preach'd at the Conſecration of the Right Reverend Father in God,

HUGH,

L^d. Biſhop of *BRISTOL*,

At *Lambeth* Chappel,

On *Sunday November* 15. 1719.

By HENRY STEPHENS, M. A. Chaplain to the Right Reverend Father in God *HUGH*, Lord Biſhop of *Briſtol*.

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1. 9. 4.
566.

2 Cor. vi. 8.

Honour, and Diſhonour, by Evil Report, and Good Report.

is the great and peculiar Character of St. *Paul* above any of the other Apoſtles, (which on this Solemnity is re eſpecially worthy of our Obſerva-) that, as he has preſcrib'd the beſt les for the due diſcharge of the E-opal Office; ſo he was himſelf not the moſt perfect, but alſo the moſt nſive and univerſal Example for all Succeſſors to imitate. So various the ſacred Labours, he was em-'d in; ſo many as well as great were Obſtacles and Dangers he conflicted

 with,

with, that ſcarce any Inſtance of D
in the Epiſcopal Function can a
Scarce any difficult Emergency befa
of which this Chief of the Apoſtles
not left a ready and excellent Prece

In this Place St. *Paul*, in lively Ima
and Strains of Divine Eloquence, re
the ſevere Croſſes and Perſecutions,
was plung'd in, and victoriouſly w
thro' for the Sake of the Goſpel. *In*
things, ſays he (with an holy Trium
approving our ſelves as the Mini
of God, in much Patience, in Affl
ons, in Neceſſities, in Diſtreſſes,
Strifes, in Impriſonments, in Tum
in Labours, in Watchings, in Faſti
And, in the Words I have read, he
ther adds, as no inconſiderable T
the Viciſſitudes of Praiſe and Repro
by Honour, and Diſhonour, by evil
port, and good Report.

The Meaning of the Words is o
ous; and, on this Occaſion, I ſhall f
them obſerve,

1*ſt*. That the Biſhops and Gover-ors of the Church muſt expect to meet ith in this World a Mixture *of Ha-our, and Diſhonour; of evil Report, nd of good Report,*

2*dly*. That both the Commendation nd Diſrepute, that attends their Actions, as each it's peculiar Temptations, which re to be guarded againſt. And,

3*dly*. That the ſureſt Defence againſt ither Aſſault, whether of *Diſhonour nd evil Report*, or of *Honour and ood Report*, is an Adherence to true rinciples.

1*ſt*. I obſerve, that the Biſhops and Governors of the Church muſt expect o meet with a Mixture *of Honour and Diſhonour, of evil Report and of good Report*: Here I ſhall conſider each Tri-l diſtinctly.

1*ſt*. It is not to be expected, but hat Perſons, who move in ſo high a ſphere, will have their Reputation ſome-imes ſully'd.

The

The Eminency of their Functi
makes them the Mark of Envy: A
where *Envy is,* there is every Iniqui
of Speech, as well as every *evil Wor*
Moſt of the Vitious, the Prophane a
Atheiſtical, will traduce the Piety of a
humble and holy Prelate: Many of th
Ignorant will depreciate his Learning
and all the Men, who would overthro
all Government in the Church, will n
ver fail to aſperſe its Rulers; that b
leſſening their Credit, they may weake
their Authority, and bring the whol
Order into Diſrepute. *This Diſhonou*
(to ſpeak in the Language of the Pſal
miſt) will *be done* them by *open Enemies*
But the deepeſt Wounds are often fix
in their Reputation by pretended
Friends; thoſe with whom they migh
rather hope *to walk* amicably *in th*
Houſe of God, and take ſweet Coun-
ſel together: Pſalm 55. 12. 15.

They, who notwithſtanding the Ob-
ligations they owe our Country and Re-
ligion

ion in General ; and their voluntary
cred Ties to his preſent Majeſty in par-
ular, can yet have a Popiſh Pretender
Heart, will be ſure plentifully to li-
the honeſt Patriot, whether in Church
State, who while he defeats their per-
ious Deſigns, expoſes and upbraids
em : And the higher his Merit is, the
eater his Power, the more will he
turally become the Object of their Ha-
d and Defamation. Here therefore
the Arts and Inſinuations of Obloquy
ill be practic'd ; Scandal, tho' never ſo
lſe or inconſiſtent, is to be ſcatter'd,
at ſome at leaſt may ſtick. The Ad-
erſaries of the Proteſtant Succeſſion
e ſenſible they can't accompliſh their
rnicious Ends, unleſs they ſink the
redit of thoſe Biſhops, who ſtand in
eir Way, amongſt the People : And
at they may be the more effectually
xpos'd to the Fury of the Multitude,
e Diſaffected will be induſtrious to
aint them in odious Colours, as the

Be-

Betrayers of the very Church, wh
they defend.

But, laſtly, the wiſeſt and beſt *Ov*
ſeers of *the Flock of Chriſt* are ſubj
(with other good Men) to ſuch M
takes and Failings as will unavoida
in ſome degree blemiſh their good Nar
and be as it were ſo many dark Sp
in the *Light* with which they *ſhine befo*
Men. The higher they are advanc
the more conſpicuous will their Infirm
ties in any kind appear, and con
quently be the more blazen'd to t
World. To uſe our Saviour's Alluſio
They are *a City ſet on a Hill, wh*
cannot be hid; whoſe weak as well
ſtrong Parts are eaſily diſcover'd. He
more eſpecially Perſons of little or
Merit make their moſt vigorous Attack
that they may bring their Superiors
Worth and Excellency, as well as Di
nity, down to a Level with themſelv
and lay their Honour in the Duſt. T
Almighty for wiſe Ends permits th

Go

ood and Great Men ſhou'd meet with
ch ill Treatment in the World, both to
mble them, and to be a Warning for
hers. And this by ſome Interpreters
thought to be that *Thorn in the Fleſh,*
Meſſenger of Satan given to St.
aul to buffet him, leaſt he ſhould be
alted above meaſure.

I have the longer dwelt on this Tri-
; becauſe the *Diſhonour and evil Re-*
rt, which the Biſhops and Governors
the Church meet with, generally over-
lances their Portion of *Honour and*
od Report; tho' they will alſo,

Secondly, find a Share of this latter Tri-
ſufficient to exerciſe and prove their
irtue. And here it is to be obſerv'd,
hat moſt of the abovementionʼd Cauſes,
hich ſink their Reputation with ſome,
ill raiſe it with others. The Eminency
f their Station will draw the Reſpect
f many of their Inferiors; All good
Men will Honour their Piety, and will
ery *highly eſteem them in Love for*

 their

their Works ſake; who *take* due *hee*
not only unto themſelves, but to *all th*
Flock, over the which the Holy Ghoſt h
made them Over-ſeers, Acts 20. 2
And theſe excellent Qualities, this co
ſcientious Diſcharge of their Du
will likewiſe extort at leaſt the ſecret R
verence of ſome amongſt the Wicke
The Studious and Men of Letters wi
value and applaud their Learning; an
the more Reproach they ſuffer fro
the Adverſaries of the Proteſtant Settl
ment by *ſtanding in the Gap* again
their Attempts, the more Veneratio
will they be juſtly requited with fro
its true Friends.

Thus have I endeavour'd to ſhow
that the Biſhops and Governors of th
Church muſt expect to meet with in th
World a Mixture of *Honour*, an
Diſhonour, *of evil Report and of goo*
Report, aſſigning the Cauſes ſeverall
of this Viciſſitude. But there are ma
ny ill Effects, which each Trial ma
pro-

roduce, unleſs heedfully guarded a-
ainſt; which is the
Second Obſervation, and comes now
the next Place to be treated of.

Indeed the Life of Man is a Scene of
hort Duration, wherein adverſe and
roſperous Accidents perpetually ſhift
heir Turns: And in all the various
Changes, whether of Sickneſs or Health,
ain or Pleaſure, Poverty or Riches, Ig-
ominy or Praiſe, we are ſtill to look
pon our ſelves in a State of Probation;
nd ſhou'd be ever on our guard a-
gainſt the preſſing and powerful Temp-
tations, which ply us on every Side.
And as the Governors of the Church,
by reaſon of their publick Appearance
on the Stage of the World, more eſpe-
cially draw the Eyes, and employ the
Tongues of Men, who for the moſt
Part cenſure or applaud them in Ex-
tremes; ſo ſhou'd they more particular-
ly be arm'd againſt the reſpective Temp-
tations both of Defamation and Praiſe.

And here likewiſe I ſhall conſider ea
Trial diſtinctly.

And *Firſt*: The Wounds fixt o
Man's Reputation (eſpecially if he be
a generous Spirit) are very grievous; a
often touch him more to the quick, th
thoſe made either on his Body, or F
tune. Accordingly we find, that no C
lamity more nearly afflicted holy *D*
vid, than *the Strife of Tongues*:
which in his *Pſalms*, he makes the m
frequent and moving Complaints.

But Reproach in the moſt ſenſib
manner affects thoſe, who, by the N
ture of their Education, have liv'd
tir'd from the World; and being n
much inur'd to this kind of ill Trea
ment, muſt neceſſarily bear it with R
luctance and Concern. Indeed M
us'd to and immerſed in publick Affai
being accuſtom'd to Scandal, are as
were harden'd againſt it; but Perſo
leſs active, and much confin'd to the
Studies, when call'd Abroad, feel eve

U

kind Blaſt of Language. Add to
s, that if their Spirits ſhou'd naturally
tender, they are ſtill farther weakened
their learned Labours: And then
y are plung'd into a Storm, almoſt
ſtitute of Strength to weather it. If
ſons inveſted with Power, betray any
theſe Apprehenſions (as 'tis indeed
ficult for the Breaſt that harbours
m intirely to conceal 'em) their mer-
ſs Adverſaries will never fail to lay
ld on, and improve this Advantage;
y will purſue the Blow, that they
y enervate the Hands, and diſmay
Hearts of thoſe, whoſe Penetration
uld ſee thro', and Abilities overthrow
deep Malice of their Deſigns.

Here therefore a Church Governor
u'd more eſpecially beware, that he be
repining, fearful, complying, or re-
s; *nor faint in the day of Battle.*
s as much his Duty (if Occaſion re-
res) to be a Martyr in his Reputati-
as in his Life: And to undergo

this

this Part of the *fiery Trial*; 'tis pe
haps no leſs difficult, and equally glo
ous. Our Saviour eſteems it ſo; wh
pronouncing *thoſe Bleſſed, that are pe
ſecuted for Righteouſneſs ſake*, imm
diately ſubjoins, *Bleſſed are ye, wh
Men ſhall revile you, and ſay all ma
ner of Evil againſt you, falſly, for
Sake*. Matthew, 5. 10, 11.

Let us next conſider the Temptatio
which Church Governors are expo
to from *Honour ad good Report*. T
Deſire of Praiſe is innate to all Me
but it more eſpecially glows in Gr
and Noble Minds; and is kindled in
by the Wiſe Author of our Beings,
excellent Purpoſes, to excite us to go
and great Actions, and deter us from m
and wicked Practices. And doubtle
good Name is one of the moſt valua
Acquiſitions of this Life; and (as
lomon truly obſerv'd) *rather to be c
ſen than great Riches*. Prov. 22.
But this, as well as all other wor
Bleſſi

leſſings, has it's proper and peculiar emptations.

What the Prophet ſays of *new Wine*, true of Praiſe; it intoxicates and *takes way the Heart*: It diſſipates the houghts, ſoftens the Powers of the ul; and makes it careleſs and unbent: nd then Vanity, Pride, Sloth, For-tfulneſs of God, are almoſt it's inſe-rable Companions. Self-Love alone les in a Man an Over-weening Opi-on of himſelf; and if to this be join'd Applauſe of the World, Self-conceit ll ſoon encreaſe and multiply in a Soil rank and luxuriant. Pride will here xt ſucceed. For when Men (eſpecially oſe in Power) once come to admire emſelves, they will ſoon over-look and ſpiſe others, and at length inſult and annize over them. And when a Man us thinks himſelf Superior, in Worth well as Station, to his Inferiors, he ows happy in and pleas'd with his ap-uded Excellency; and then ſits down con-

contented with his preſent imagin
ſhare of Fame, and ſlothfully negle
thoſe Talents, which 'tis juſtly expec
he ſhou'd farther improve.

But there is no Sin, into which I
putation more eaſily betrays our Hea
than an ungrateful Diſregard of
Maker; tho' to him we owe every
gree of Excellency of what kind ſoe
But in the full Tide of Applauſe, M
Thoughts generally run towards,
terminate in themſelves; And they
apt to conſider their ſuperior Adva
ges, not ſo much the Gifts of Hea
as the ſucceſsful Effects of their
Skill and Abilities. There is

Laſtly, this farther dangerous
al, to which Praiſe expoſes Perſons
Diſtinction and Eminency: Namely,
Arts and Inſinuations of deſigning Ad
rers; to which their Minds are hereby
ten left open, and defenceleſs. So that
whom neither the Smiles of Fortune co
corrupt, nor Frowns terrify, have bee

lly allur'd by the Charms of Praiſe. Vain-Glory is a Weakneſs, to which he beſt and greateſt Men have been ubject; and by which they are the ſieſt betray'd. Here the inſidious latterer takes his Stand *and ſhoots out is Arrows, ſoft Words*; which (to ſe the Scripture Expreſſion) *tho' ſmooth- than Oyl, yet are they as Wounds* nd Death; till at length he triumphs ith the Spoils of even Piety, and Wiſ- om. Moſt of the other Attacks made n Men in Power, find them watchful, nd in a Poſture of Defence; And they may with no great Difficulty defeat or e- vade the Temptations: But Praiſe not only diſarms, but many times ſoftens the Mind to ſuch a Degree, that it yields almoſt to any Impreſſion. It likewiſe makes Self-Love riſe in the Enemy's In- tereſt; and the moſt obſtinate Virtue, the moſt ſagacious Prudence, when thus aſſaulted without, and betray'd with- in, runs a great Riſque of being taken by Surpriſe.

From what has been ſaid, it appea
that many and great are the Tria
which the Biſhops and Governors of t
Church, encounter from either Sid
Reproach, or Praiſe: But likewiſe, t
Temptations of Reproach are few
and leſs dangerous, than thoſe of Praiſe
and for the clearer Evidence of this, l
us view them plac'd in Oppoſition on
to the other.

Indeed Reproach touches Men in th
moſt ſenſible part of Self-Love; yet a
the Wounds are painful, ſo theſe often
prove wholeſome and advantagious
But Praiſe, while it ſooths Self-Love
intoxicates the Mind; and here the
Wounds are dangerous, becauſe unfelt.
Reproach makes Men conſiderate; but
good Report is apt to render them
thoughtleſs and ſecure. The former
often awakens the Conſcience: But the
latter lulls it to ſleep. The one natu-
rally leads us to correct thoſe Faults,
we are aſperſed with, the other indulges

us

in the loss of those good Qualities, we are commended for. Disgrace indeed may make us repine at God: But praise tempts us to forget him. But then the former may be the Parent of Humility: But the latter too often begets Pride and Arrogance. In our Transactions with others, we may gain this Advantage from Defamation, that as we hereby discover an open Enemy, so we can be upon our Guard against him; but Commendation conceals a treacherous Friend, and leaves us a naked and easy Prey to his Devices. In a word, from *evil Report* we may reap all the Fruits of a sanctified Adversity: And by *good Report* the Heart may be ensnar'd with all the Allurements of a sinful Prosperity. Accordingly our Saviour pronounces a Blessing to the one Side, and a Curse to the other. *Blessed* (says he) *are ye when Men shall revile you, and say all manner of Evil*

against you; but woe to you when All Men speak well of you.

However, since so many and gr
are the Temptations on both sides, a
which the higher Men are advanc
have the more pernicious Influence
them; the Bishops and Governors
the Church ought to be more especia
cautious and circumspect, that in t
Day of Trial they may come off v
torious; which leads me to the

Third and last Thing propos'd, nam
ly, That the surest Defence against
ther Assault, whether of *Dishonour a*
evil Report; or *Honour and good R*
port, is an Adherence to true Principl

A Zeal for the Glory of God a
the Salvation of Men; a strict Rega
to the Laws and Constitution of Churc
and State, (the true Interest of bo
which are inseparable) and an u
dissembled Loyalty to our Sovereign, a
the solid Principles, on which if a Go
vernor builds his Resolution, it will re

main

in unſhaken amidſt all the Viciſſitudes
Life: For, they give a Strength, a
rmneſs and Intrepidity to the Mind;
d particularly, as to the Attacks of
niſe and Reproach, they will be (to
the Apoſtles Phraſe) an *Armour on*
Right Hand and on the Left. When
rſons of theſe ſound Principles, of a
date, try'd Courage, of a ſolid Judg-
ent, farther fortify'd with deep and
rious Learning, and adorn'd with Af-
bility and Sweetneſs of Temper, are
oſen to rule in the Church; the juſt
xpectations of good and honeſt Men
ll not be diſappointed.

It is the ineſtimable Happineſs of this
tion, and the peculiar Glory of our
ing, that as he has formed wiſe and
eat Reſolutions of governing his Peo-
, ſo in Defiance to every Oppoſition
maintains them inviolably. And when
Biſhops by their like Steadineſs ſe-
nd his Deſigns, all ~~unanſwerable~~ diſ-
unreasonable
qui-

quieting Apprehensions will vanish like a *Dream*.

To conclude; Whatever outward Trials of *Honour and Dishonour*, *evil Report and of good Report*, such Bishops meet with from Men; Yet here they enjoy the comfortable Testimony of a good Conscience within, and will hereafter receive the glorious Approbation of God and his Holy Angels.

FINIS.